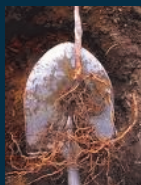


# The Civic Green

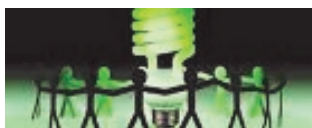
## Plan Now for Growing Your Own



Here in California, we don't have to wait until spring to start our gardens back up again. Fall is the perfect time for replenishing the soil in order to prepare for spring planting. The answer to almost all your soil needs is organic material. The decomposing waste that makes up organic material replenishes nutrients, retains water and minerals for later use, attracts beneficial organisms and aerates the dirt. Compost, humus, and green manures are all forms of organic material. Compost and humus can be made at home or purchased in stores. Green manure involves planting legumes or grains (peas, soybeans, alfalfa, buckwheat) during winter that insulates the ground, fights off weed growth, and brings nitrogen back into the soil. At least three weeks before spring planting, till the plants into the soil to allow enough time for decomposition. Cheers to happy gardens and healthy communities!



## Save Energy with Lighting Upgrades



Updating your older lighting systems is both an environmentally friendly and economically smart idea! By implementing and utilizing new technologies such as light bulbs, timers, sensors, and modern fixtures, we can reduce energy consumption without compromising our quality of light. These new measures will save you money and help preserve the environment.

### Where Does Our Energy Come From?

Coal is the biggest source of energy for electricity in America and in the world, but has high wear on the environment (U.S. Energy Information Administration). Mining coal involves such methods as mountaintop removal (it's exactly what it sounds like: removing the tops of mountains to get to coal reserves) and deforestation. Extracting and burning coal are dirty processes responsible for acid rain and the emission of large quantities of toxins such as carbon,



mercury and arsenic into the atmosphere and water. Decreasing electricity consumption means reducing destructive practices associated with coal and therefore should be encouraged.

### How to Reduce Electricity Use

A few things you can do to update your lighting options in your home and office include:

#### Changing light bulbs.



The easiest and most basic lighting upgrade is replacing normal incandescent light bulbs with CFL (compact fluorescent light) bulbs that efficiently use light and reduce consumption.

#### Replacing old lamps.

The U.S. Department of Energy has passed several regulations and acts to slowly phase out and ban old technology such as magnetic ballasts (to be replaced for electronic ballasts). Jeanette Strainic of GE Lighting states that "with new high-efficiency electronic ballasts, total system wattage can be reduced more than 40 percent relative to the use of older T12 fluorescent systems" (Veolia Environ-

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## The RecycleBank Website

Readers of this newsletter already know the many benefits of the RecycleBank program, but did you know that the RecycleBank website is more than a place to monitor your account and redeem your points? It's also a great resource for green living tips and much more. When you visit: [www.recyclebank.com](http://www.recyclebank.com), you'll see a tab called Live Green. Click on this tab to get green living tips for your home, your lifestyle and our world. Current articles include: "Flavors of Fall: Take Advantage of Autumn's Harvest" and "Happy Hallo-Green! Tips for an Eco-Friendly Celebration". There's also a discussion forum where you can share your ideas and read what others have done to reduce their impact on the planet. I found an interesting animated video called "The Cycle" which follows different materials through the recycling process. If you've ever wondered what happens to your recycling once it leaves the curb, you'll find it interesting, too. Finally, you can sign up for the RecycleBank newsletter to receive updates, news, helpful tips and reminder e-mails at [www.recyclebank.com/live\\_green](http://www.recyclebank.com/live_green)

mental Services). Effective July 2010, all new lamps and light sources will ensure efficient energy use by requiring all T12 fluorescent lamps to have electronic ballasts.

### Installing timers and sensors.

Timers that are in sync with the astronomical clock can automatically turn off lights or dim them at certain times of the day while adjusting to day-to-day changes of sunrises and sunsets. Sensors can also be used to sense movement and turn off lights when room occupants are absent. These can also be used to dim lights when enough sunlight is present in the room.

### Using daylight when it's available.

Installing skylights and windows reduces the amount of electricity used during the day and naturally makes the room brighter.

### Keeping an eye out for residential use LEDs in the future.

LEDs (light emitting diodes), though expensive, are highly efficient and long lasting bulbs for industrial use. Keep an eye out in the near future for more affordable LEDs, as research is being done to make LEDs more accessible and cheaper to the public.



Focus on increasing efficiency and reducing your energy use when updating your existing lighting fixtures--your wallet and your environment will thank you!

We have two excellent sources for green lighting products right here in Morgan Hill. The Morgan Hill Home Depot at 860 E. Dunne Avenue offers a variety of Energy Star compliant lighting products including CFL bulbs, outdoor solar powered motion sensors and insulated, air-tight recessed lighting housings. Johnson Lumber/Ace Hardware at 600 Tennant Avenue also carries a full selection of green lighting products including solar landscape lights, motion activated security lights and CFL/compact fluorescent/LED lighting. Their newest green product is a battery operated, under counter LED light bar that is twice as efficient as CFL's, contains no mercury and has a longer life. Speaking of mercury, it is illegal to place CFL's and fluorescent tubes in the trash. Johnson Lumber /Ace Hardware is a recycling location for batteries, fluorescent tubes and CFL's generated by residential users. And...when you go out to purchase your energy efficient lighting products, don't forget to bring your reusable bags!



## This Month's Green Living Tip:

### Save Energy with PG & E's Duct Sealing Rebate

Although we still have some warm days ahead, soon we will be waking up to chilly mornings and thinking about turning on the heater. Did you know that up to 20% of the heated or cooled air in your home may be wasted by leaky ducts? That means you could be paying to heat an attic or crawl space instead of your living room. Properly sealed and installed ductwork can make your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system more efficient



and your home more comfortable. When you test and seal your existing central air conditioning duct systems, you may qualify for a rebate of up to \$200 from PG&E. Properly sealed ducts will help you save money, save energy and reduce your greenhouse gas emissions. To see rebate requirements and conditions, visit: <http://www.pge.com/myhome/saveenergymoney/rebates/coolheat/duct/termsandconditions/> or call PG & E at 1-800-933-9555.



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